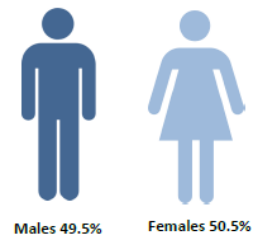
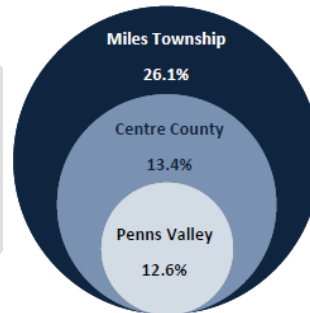


GEOGRAPHY	2000 CENSUS	2010 CENSUS
Centre Hall Borough	1,079	1,265
Gregg Township	2,119	2,405
Haines Township	1,479	1,564
Miles Township	1,573	1,983
Millheim Borough	749	904
Penn Township	1,044	1,181
Potter Township	3,339	3,517
Penns Valley	11,382	12,819
Centre County	135,758	153,990



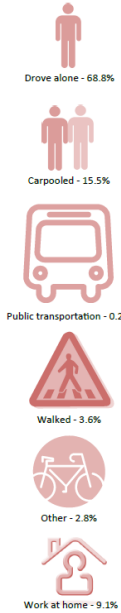
### Population Growth



### Population by Race



### Commuting to Work

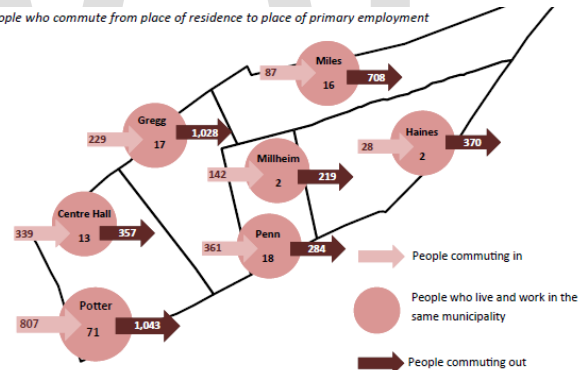


Geography	POPULATION 16 YEARS OF AGE AND OLDER	POPULATION IN THE LABOR FORCE	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
Centre Hall Borough	927	62.0% (575)	1.9%
Gregg Township	2,012	68.3% (1,375)	6.0%
Haines Township	1,176	63.9% (752)	10.5%
Miles Township	1,332	63.9% (845)	9.3%
Millheim Borough	631	68.0% (429)	3.5%
Penn Township	715	68.8% (492)	6.3%
Potter Township	2,932	69.5% (2,038)	1.0%
Penns Valley	9,715	67.0% (6,506)	4.9%
Centre County	132,426	59.0% (78,070)	5.9%

### Regional Commuter Workflows

Number of people who commute from place of residence to place of primary employment

Number of people who commute from place of residence to place of primary employment



## **CHAPTER 4 Market feasibility-if the trail were built, who would use it, and for what purposes?**

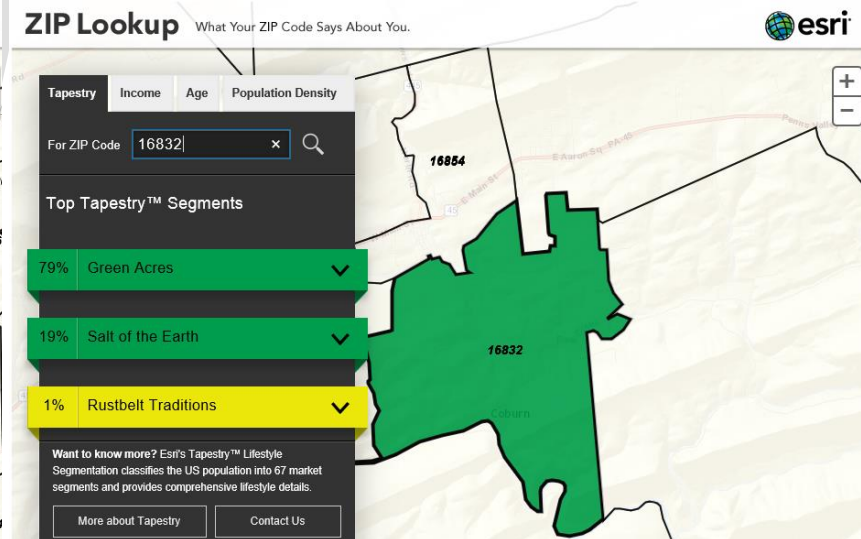
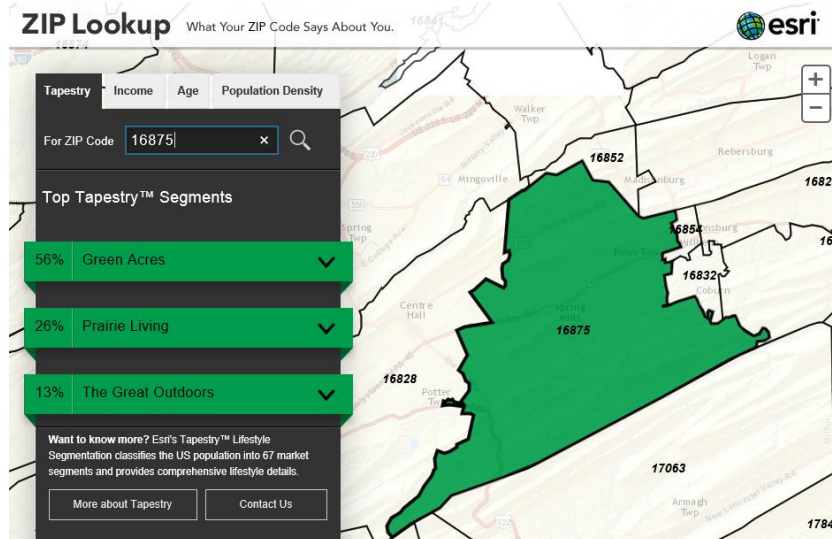
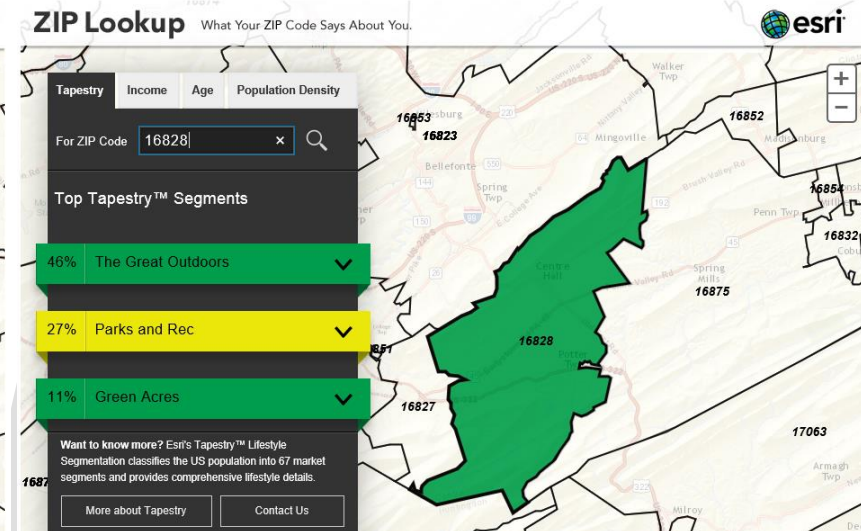
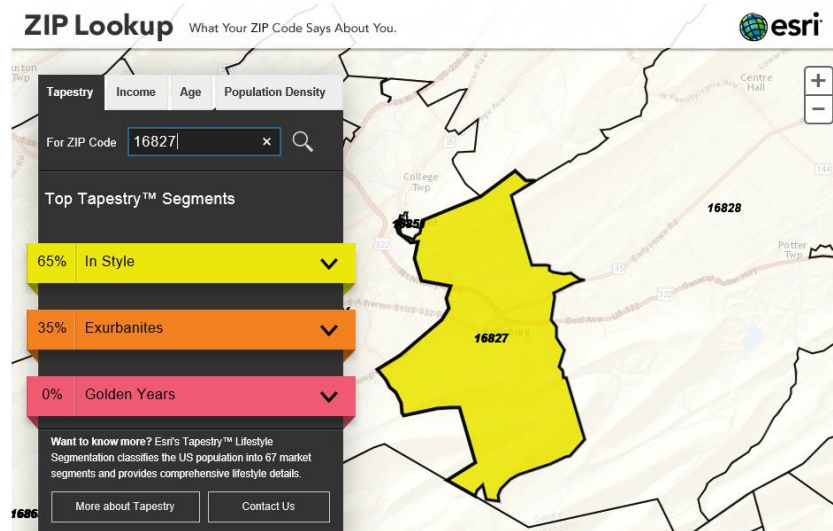
We arrived at estimates for demand and potential use of the trail through a variety of analyses, including a review of demographics, lifestyle choices, a Trail User Preference Survey of potential trail users from the valleys completed in 2013, a 2006 survey of actual users of the Pine Creek destination type trail in nearby Lycoming County and a 2012 survey of the community based Buffalo Valley Rail Trail in neighboring Union County.

### **DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF PENNS AND BRUSH VALLEYS**

The Centre County Office of Planning and Community Development compiles demographic information for each region of the County, based on data from the 2010 Census, historical data from the 2000 Census where comparisons are useful to illustrate trends, and the American Community Survey for 2008-2012. The County Planning Office defines the “Penns Valley Region” as the six municipalities the railbed passes through on its path through the County, including Harris Township, Potter Township, Centre Hall Borough, Gregg Township, Haines Township and Penn Township, plus Millheim Borough in Penns Valley and Miles Township in Brush Valley.

The population of the Penns Valley Region (i.e.; Penns and Brush Valleys) grew from 11,382 people in 2000 to 12,819 people in 2010, a growth rate of 12.6%, slightly less than the county growth rate of 13.4%. Miles Township (Brush Valley) had the highest rate of growth of at 26.1%, while Haines (5%) and Potter (6%) townships experienced the slowest growth. The population is fairly evenly split between men (49.5%) and women (50.5%) and racially dominated by whites (99%). Nearly two thirds of the population (6,506) are employed in the workforce. Unemployment in the valleys is 4.9%, a full percentage point lower than the county as a whole. Communities closer to State College have the lowest unemployment rates (Potter Township’s rate is 1%, Centre Hall Borough’s rate is 1.9%) while townships further away are much higher (9.1% for Miles Township, 10.5% for Haines Township). Most people work somewhere other than the place they live. For example, 17 people live and work in Gregg Township, but 229 people commute in, and 1,028 commute somewhere else each day. 68.8% of Penns and Brush valley’s commuters drove alone, 15.5% carpooled, .02% used public transportation, 3.6% walked, 2.8% used some other form of transportation (e.g.; bicycles), and 9.1% worked out of their homes.

## A LOOK AT DEMOGRAPHICS BASED ON ESRI TAPESTRY SEGMENTS



ARC GIS Tapestry segmentation provides detailed descriptions of U.S. residential areas divided into 67 distinctive segments based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition. A search of the 27 mile corridor by zip code revealed 10 distinct Tapestry segments among the top 3 segments for each zip code (see socio-econ profiles for each segment below). Of those distinct population segments, 26% of people living in the 16801 zip code fit the *In Style* segment, 37% *Dorms & Diplomas*, and 19% *Collegetown*. 100% of people in Lemont (zip 16851) and 65% of Boalsburg residents (zip 16827) also fit the *In Style* group, while the remaining Boalsburg population (35%) fits the *Exurbanite* demographic profile. Centre Hall's zip code (16828) begins to take on a decidedly more rural demographic, with 46% of people in *The Great Outdoors* segment, 27% in *Parks & Rec*, and 11% in *Green Acres*. The demographic grows even more rural in Spring Mills (zip 16875), with 56% in *Green Acres*, 26% in *Prairie Living*, and 13% in *The Great Outdoors*. Coburn (zip 16832) adds yet another lifestyle group, *Salt of the Earth* (19%), with the majority (79%) in the *Green Acres* demographic, and a mere 1% in the *Rust Belt Traditional*. In the gap beyond the valleys, 100% of residents in the Aaronsburg (16820) and Woodward zip (16882) fit the very rural *Salt of the Earth* demographic.

GEOGRAPHIC SOCIO-ECON REGION:	STATE COLLEGE	LEMONT	BOALSBURG	CENTRE HALL	SPRING MILLS	COBURN	AARONSBURG	WOODWARD
ZIP CODE	16801	16851	16827	16828	16875	16832	16820	16882
MED INCOME	\$ 32,000	\$ 54,000	\$ 76,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 57,000	\$ 53,000	\$ 53,000
MED AGE	24.4	41.3	45.3	46.1	43.1	37.2	36.3	36.5
POP DENSITY	1471	2838	290	79	46	82	59	15

**TAPESTRY SEGMENT:**

GREEN ACRES				11%	56%	79%		
SALT OF THE EARTH						19%	100%	100%
RUST BELT TRADITION						1%		
PRAIRIE LIVING					26%			
THE GREAT OUTDOOR				46%	13%			
PARKS & REC				27%				
IN STYLE	26%	100%	65%					
EXURBANITES			35%					
DORMS & DIPLOMAS	37%							
COLLEGE TOWN	19%							

Tapestry's 67 distinct segments can be further grouped by markets that share similar traits. **LifeMode** groups share a common experience—people born in the same generation or immigration from another country—or a significant demographic trait, like affluence, while **Urbanization** groups share similar locales, from the largest cities to rural farm lanes. The vast majority of people living along the corridor live in the **Urbanization** group Tapestry defines as *Rural* (includes *Green Acres*, *Salt of the Earth*, *The Great Outdoors*, and *Prairie Living*) with the following characteristics:

- Country living featuring single-family homes with acreage, farms and rural resort areas
- Very low population density distinguishes this group—typically less than 50 people per square mile
- Over half of all households are occupied by persons 55 years and older; many are married couples without children at home
- The least diverse group, with over 80% non-Hispanic White
- Mostly home owners (> 80%) , but rentals are affordable in single-family or mobile homes
- Long trips to the store and to work—often driven alone in a truck or SUV, listening to country radio
- Blue collar jobs dominate the landscape including manufacturing, agriculture, mining and construction
- Many are self-employed, retired, or receive income from Social Security
- Satellite TV and landline phones are necessary means to connect
- **More conservative in their spending practices and beliefs**
- Comfortable, established and not likely to move

A search of the corridor by zip code revealed four **LifeMode** groups, including *Scholars & Patriots*, *Affluent Estates*, *GenXurban*, and *Cozy Country Living*. State College's students and recent grads (College Towns and Dorms to Diplomas segments) fit the *Scholars and Patriots* Life Mode, characterized by:

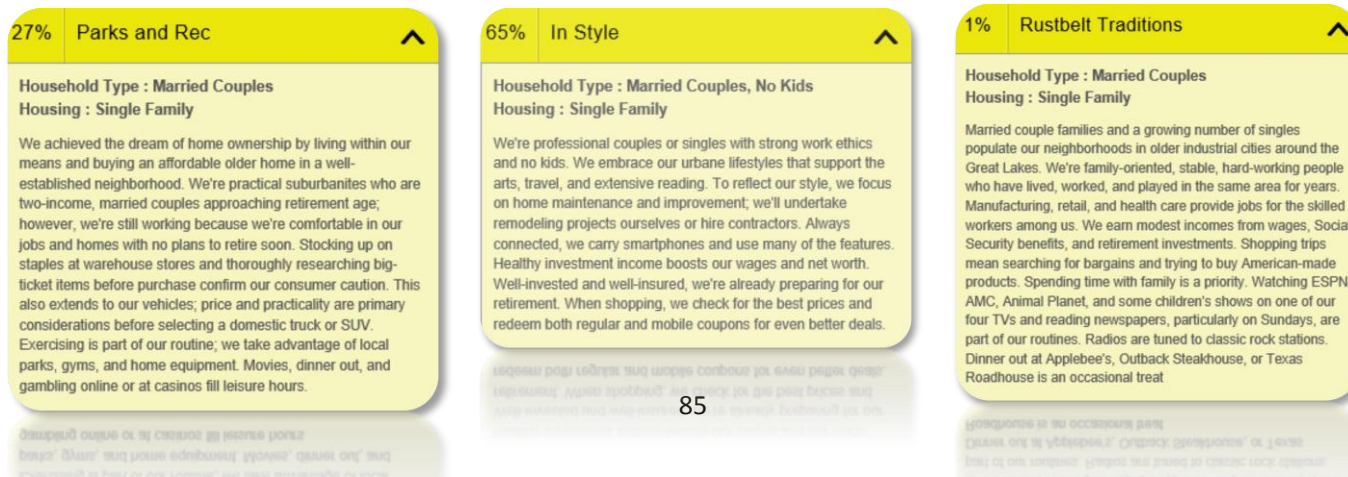
- College and military populations that share many traits due to the transitional nature of this LifeMode Group
- Highly mobile, recently moved to attend school or serve in military
- The youngest market group, with a majority in the 15 to 24 year old range
- Renters with roommates in nonfamily households
- For many, no vehicle is necessary as they live close to campus, military base or jobs
- Fast-growing group with most living in apartments built after 2000
- Part-time jobs help to supplement active lifestyles
- Millennials are tethered to their phones and electronic devices, typically spending 5 hours a day tweeting, blogging, and consuming media
- Purchases aimed at fitness, fashion, technology and the necessities of moving
- Highly social, free time is spent enjoying music and drinks with friends
- Try to eat healthy, but often succumb to fast food

Boalsburg's *Exurbanites* fit Tapestry's most affluent LifeMode group called, *Affluent Estates*, characterized by:

- Established wealth—educated, well-traveled married couples
- Accustomed to "more": less than 10% of all households, with 20% of household income
- Homeowners (almost 90%), with mortgages (70%)
- Married couple families with children ranging from grade school to college
- Expect quality; invest in time-saving services
- Participate actively in their communities
- Active in sports and enthusiastic travelers

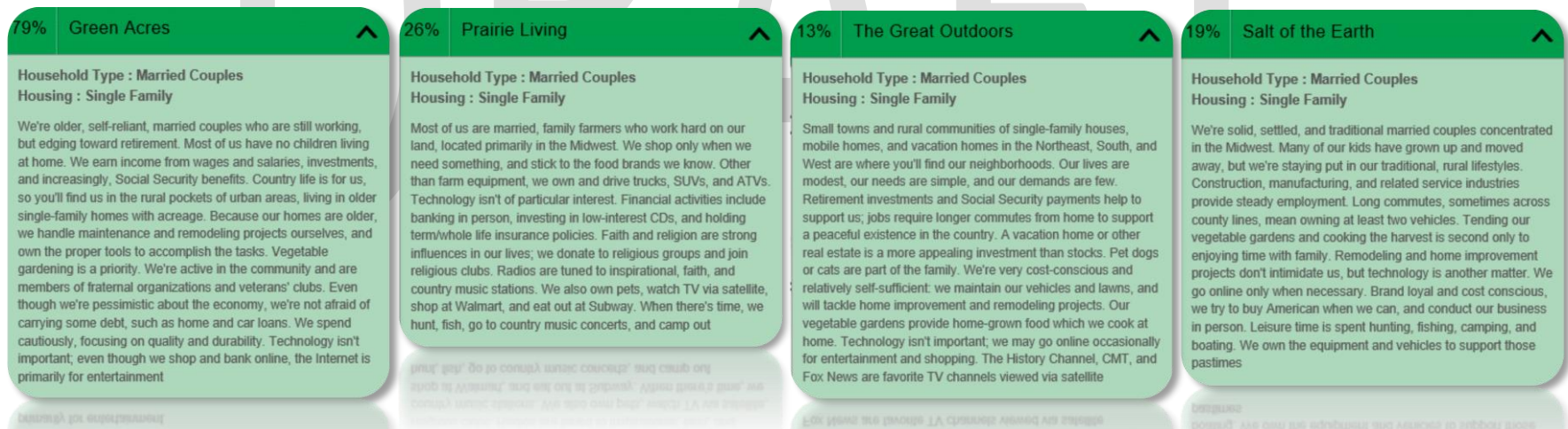
Boalsburg, Lemont and Centre Hall's *In Style* and *Parks & Rec* groups and Coburn's *Rustbelt Traditions* (1%) fit Tapestry's LifeMode *GenXurban*, characterized by:

- Gen X in middle age; families with fewer kids and a mortgage
- Second largest Tapestry group, comprised of Gen X married couples, and a growing population of retirees
- About a fifth of residents are 65 or older; about a fourth of households have retirement income
- Own older single-family homes in urban areas, with 1 or 2 vehicles
- Live and work in the same county, creating shorter commute times
- Invest wisely, well-insured, comfortable banking online or in person
- News junkies (read a daily newspaper, watch news on TV, and go online for news)
- Enjoy reading, photo album/scrapbooking, playing board games and cards, doing crossword puzzles, going to museums and rock concerts, dining out, and walking for exercise

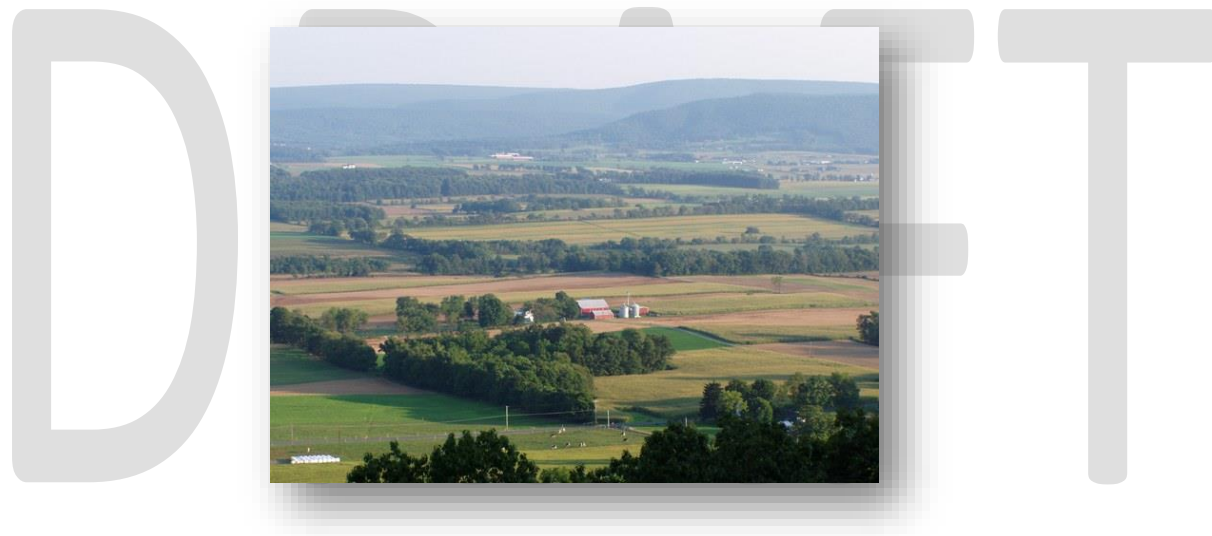


Centre Hall, Spring Mills, Coburn, and the Gap's *Green Acres*, *Salt of the Earth*, *Great Outdoors* and *Prairie Living* zip codes fit tapestry's *Cozy Country Living* LifeMode profile, characterized by:

- Empty nesters in bucolic settings
- Largest Tapestry group, almost half of households located in the Midwest
- Homeowners with pets, residing in single-family dwellings in rural areas; almost 30% have 3 or more vehicles and, therefore, auto loans
- Politically conservative and believe in the importance of buying American
- Own domestic trucks, motorcycles, and ATVs/UTVs
- Prefer to eat at home, shop at discount retail stores (especially Walmart), bank in person, and spend little time online
- Own every tool and piece of equipment imaginable to maintain their homes, vehicles, vegetable gardens, and lawns
- Listen to country music, watch auto racing on TV, and play the lottery; enjoy outdoor activities, such as fishing, hunting, camping, boating, and even bird watching



DRAFT



## LIFESTYLES OF THE VALLEYS & THE GAP THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS BEYOND THEM

While the ESRI analysis provides some insight into the community based on national statistics compiled from consumer buying habits, we thought it would be useful to share our own thoughts about people's attitudes about rail trails from our own experience of working in this community. Although originally christened *The "Penns Valley" Rail Trail Feasibility Study* by the planners who first imagined the possibility of a rail trail on the former *Lewisburg and Tyrone (L&T)* railbed, the abandoned rail corridor actually passes through two valleys in eastern *Centre County* -- *Upper Brush Valley* east of Lemont and west of *Centre Hall*, the hinge point of the valleys and the railbed, and *Lower Penns Valley*, between *Centre Hall* and Coburn-- before slipping through the gap between Thick and Poe Paddy mountains carved by Penns Creek between Coburn and the *Centre County* line. The people who occupy these three communities: Penns Valley, Brush Valley, and "the gap through the mountains beyond them" are in many cases as "culturally distinct" as they are "geographically distinct." In many cases, attitudes about rail trails and people's likelihood of using it may have as much to do with values and lifestyle choices as they do about the places they chose to live, work and play. The **traditional farming community**, made up of Amish and "English" farmers, is the most visible community occupying both valleys along and near the corridor of this railbed, practicing a lifestyle that for centuries has by its very nature preserved the character defining features of this rural landscape. That lifestyle has contributed much to the valleys' significance, earning the valley's eligibility for listing on the prestigious National Register of Historic Places. As hunting and fishing, the recreational preferences most often associated with this traditional lifestyle group, continue their steady decline—a long term trend generally following the decline in the number of people living on the farm since WWII—participation in outdoor activities like hiking, biking and wildlife watching continue to grow among residents of traditional rural communities. While it's difficult to know with certainty if the traditional farming communities of Penns and Brush valleys would follow that trend if a rail trail was built in this valley, it's not unusual to see the more visually identifiable members of the traditional farming community in Buffalo Valley, the Mennonites, walking or riding bikes or scooters on the Buffalo Valley Rail Trail in neighboring Union County. As in most cases where a railbed has been abandoned and reverted back to the present heirs of the landowners who first granted the railroad a right of passage through their property, it's understandable that those who own and use the railbed now for their own purposes and enjoyment may not be as quick to embrace the idea of sharing their land with neighbors who don't own the right of way now but would enjoy having access to it for their own purposes and enjoyment.



Jammin at the Elk Creek Café in Millheim

In many cases, it's a matter of lifestyle and familiarity with rail trails that inspire those who frequent them to enthusiastically embrace the idea of a rail trail on their land or their neighbor's land. The community most familiar with and in most cases supportive of rail trails in "the valleys" is the demographic group many locals refer to as the **alternative community**, a group that has over the last several decades brought its own special blend of lifestyles and values to the valleys. Attracted by the pristine character of the landscape and a desire to live close to nature while still enjoying the cultural and educational amenities of a setting positioned equidistant between Penn State, Bucknell, and Lock Haven University, they also have been some of the valley's most entrepreneurial residents, working as self-employed carpenters, electricians, and artisans of all trades and crafts, many opening coffee shops, cafes, art galleries, on-farm markets, and brew pubs that have brought a vibrancy and sense of renewal to many of the valleys' historic commercial and cultural centers. Many of the alternatives are also farmers who practice "alternative" forms of agriculture, like permaculture, biodynamic and organic farming. Not surprisingly, many of the alternatives also tend to prefer alternative forms of transportation, like walking or biking where and when they can, so it's understandable that a rail a trail would be a high priority for many of them.

Another significant community occupying the valleys is comprised of people who, for the most part, work at Penn State or one of the many industries that have grown up around the University, people who make their living "off" rather than "on" or "from" this land. Locals refer to this demographic group as **the bedroom community** because they spend their days at work in State College and their evenings at home in the countryside. Although some bedroom community residents do live on farms or farmettes, most of them live on small lots carved from the farm, or in one of the many rural hamlets, villages or boroughs that blossomed when the railroad came through the valley. Having access to open space and recreational opportunities, like parks and trails, is understandably going to be a greater priority for residents of the bedroom community living in close quarters than for the "traditional" farming community more accustomed to passing leisure time hunting and fishing on their own land than hiking or biking on a trail. Many of them also value the open space that surrounds them for its aesthetic value, thankful that the farmers who own or rent the land are still able to make a living from it. But many of these non-farm residents also moved to this region to escape busier lives elsewhere. Some of them place privacy at the top of their list of rural values, and many of them expressed concern that the 27 mile "destination" type trail originally proposed by planners will bring too many "outsiders," diminishing the rural character that drew them here in the first place.



*"Hey, look at that, what do you know, it looks like a village.  
I thought you said there were no towns on the map around here?  
Oh, I did, you wanna see the map?  
Oh no, I believe you.  
Well come on, let's go down, there must be people down there.  
Funny, it isn't on the map.  
Well, maybe they don't like publicity."*

Exchange between two grouse hunters from New York City on the hill overlooking the magical village of Brigadoon; from the movie **Brigadoon**.

The concern for privacy is even greater for the people who own what are --for the most part-- seasonally occupied camps in the remote region of the gap Penns Creek carved through Thick and Poe Paddy mountains in Bald Eagle State Forest. The **seasonal community** living in the gap beyond the valleys comprises a fourth distinct population living alongside the railbed that follows Penns Creek on its journey through the county. The hills and hollows of the gap attract a variety of folk, some from distant places who come here infrequently to enjoy the privacy, fresh mountain air, pristine native trout filled waters and dark skies at night, and others who live nearby and come more often to get away from the hustle and bustle of the places they live and work. It's not surprising that among this group we found a few landowners excited about sharing the magic of their "Brigadoon" between Ingleby and Poe Paddy with others, and many, many more landowners in favor of "keeping things the way they are," fearing that the region's infrastructure is already at its limit during peak hunting and fishing seasons, and that improving and branding the rail bed as a destination will bring too much publicity and too many strangers, destroying the tranquility and magical qualities of their real life Brigadoon.

While not necessarily living in this region, the "**outdoor recreation/tourism community**" is another socio-economic unit whose attitudes about the rail trail are very much tied to their livelihood, and therefore, generally in favor of the rail trail. This group, which in many cases overlaps with the alternative lifestyle community in this region, includes outfitters, fly fishing guides, liveries, bike shops, outdoor clothiers, and other tourism related businesses that stand to profit from outdoor recreation, such as B&B's, restaurants, cafes, convenience stores, brew pubs, gas stations, and tack and bridle shops.

## PENNS & BRUSH VALLEYS RAIL TRAIL feasibility study

Follow us on Facebook



...a rail trail were to be built on or near the abandoned L&T railbed somewhere between Lemont & the County line east of Ingleby...

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ 2. My Age Group is:

☐ Less than 20 ☐ 20 to 30 ☐ 30 to 40 ☐ 40 to 50 ☐ 50 to 60 ☐ Over 60

3. I live in : ☐ Penns Valley ☐ Brush Valley ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## TRAIL USERS PREFERENCES SURVEY

### PENNS & BRUSH VALLEYS RAIL TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY

Prepared by albertin vernon architecture LLC with Brian Auman, Landscape Architect for the Penns & Brush Valleys Rail Trail Study Committee

COMMENTS: (please leave your responses in the box at this location-thanks!)



4. ... what would you use the trail for?

☐ Walking ☐ Biking ☐ Hiking ☐ Hunting ☐ Fishing

☐ Commuting ☐ Teaching ☐ Access to Public Lands

☐ Horseback Riding ☐ Cross Country Skiing ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

5. ... how often would you use the trail?

☐ Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Occasionally \_\_\_\_\_ times/year (estimate)

6. ... how many hours would you typically spend on the trail?

☐ Less than 2 hours ☐ 2 to 4 hours ☐ More than 4 hours

7. ... how far would you typically travel on the trail?

☐ Less than 2 miles ☐ 2 to 10 miles ☐ More than 10 miles

8. ... which of the following businesses might you use during your visit?

☐ Cafes/Restaurants ☐ Outfitters/Guides ☐ Lodging (B&B, Hotel, etc)

☐ Convenience Store ☐ Gas stations ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

9. ... how much money would you expect to spend on a typical trail visit?

☐ Less than \$25 ☐ \$25 to \$50 ☐ \$50 to \$75 ☐ \$75 to \$100 ☐ \$100 plus

A group of local people are exploring the feasibility of establishing a rail trail in Penns and Brush Valleys on lands that have **willing owners**, **community support** and **public access**. This survey will be used to help determine the kind of interest and potential spending by people who might use the trail if a trail it is determined to be feasible.

You can learn more about this project by visiting us at:  
[www.centrecountypa.gov](http://www.centrecountypa.gov) or by following us on Facebook at:  
**PENNS & BRUSH VALEYS RAIL TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY**

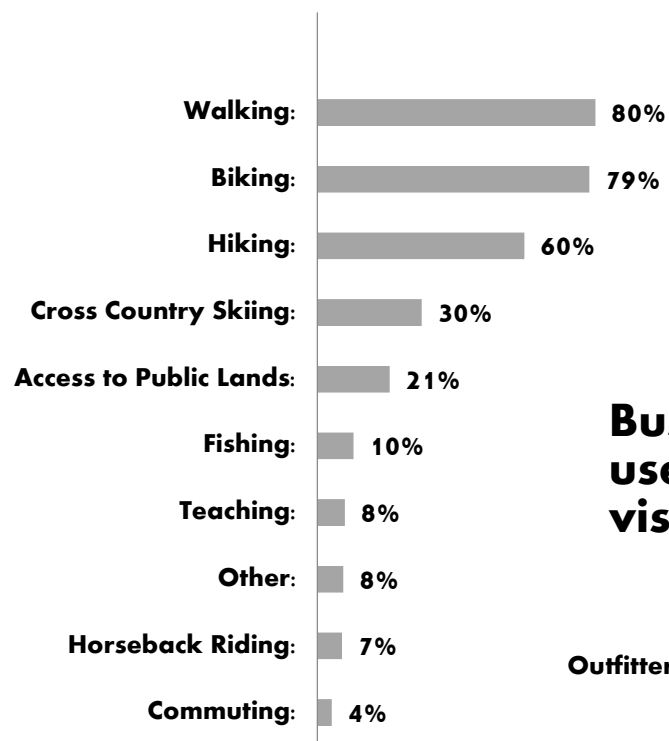
## PENNS & BRUSH VALLEYS TRAIL USERS PREFERENCE SURVEY

In order to get a sense of who might use the trail “if” it were built, we prepared a Trail User Preference Survey with 9 simple questions that we estimated it would take people 5 minutes or less to complete. We prefaced the questions with this statement, *“If a rail trail were to be built on or near the abandoned L&T railbed somewhere between Lemont and the county line east of Ingleby...what would you use the trail for, how often would you use it, how many hours would you typically spend on it, how far would you typically travel on the trail, which businesses might you use during your visit, and how much money would you expect to spend on a typical trail visit.”* We also asked them to include their name to make sure we did not get duplicates, to identify their age group to get a demographic profile of the users, and whether they lived in Penns Valley, Brush Valley, or some “other” place. We also left a space for them to fill in comments, and included a map of the route of the railbed through the county, and the following statement:

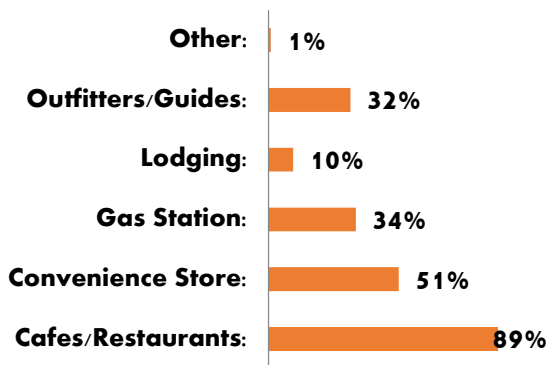
“A group of local people are exploring the feasibility of establishing a rail trail in Penns and Brush Valleys on lands that have **willing owners, community support, and public access**. This survey will be used to help determine the kind of interest and potential spending by people who might use the trail if a trail is determined to be feasible.”

We also listed the address of the FACEbook page for the project, and the county website for people who wished to learn more about the project. We listed specific answers to choose from for every question to make it easy for them to check the answers that apply, and to make it possible for us to graph their responses. We also included an “other” category for questions where it made sense to do so. We collected the surveys in person so we could answer any questions they had about the survey. Many survey respondents said they appreciated having the checklist for the question, “what would you use the trail for,” because it helped them think of things they might not otherwise have considered, like “teaching” or “commuting.” We set up a booth to collect our Trail User Preference Surveys at three events that occurred over the spring and summer of 2013, including a website rollout for *Trail2Creek* at the Brementown Ballroom in Millheim, FarmFest in Centre Hall, and CrikFest in Coburn. We chose those 3 venues because we thought they would provide information from a community of potential trail users (the group we identified as the “alternative community” in the section above) with a high probability of actually using the trail.

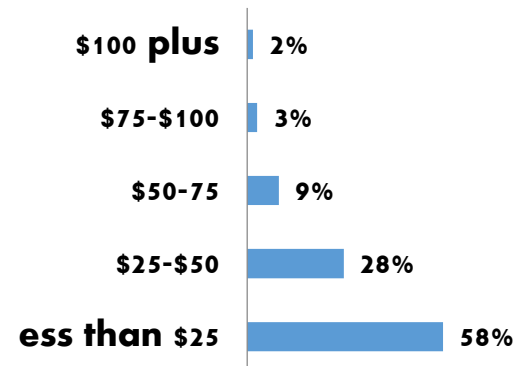
## I would use the trail for:



## Businesses I might use during my visit:

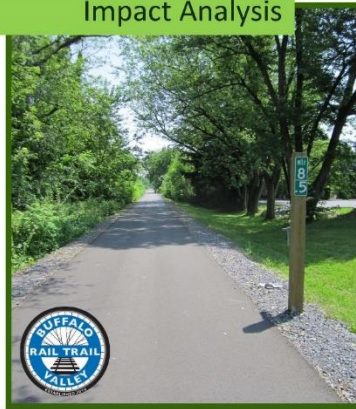


## \$ I would expect to spend per visit:



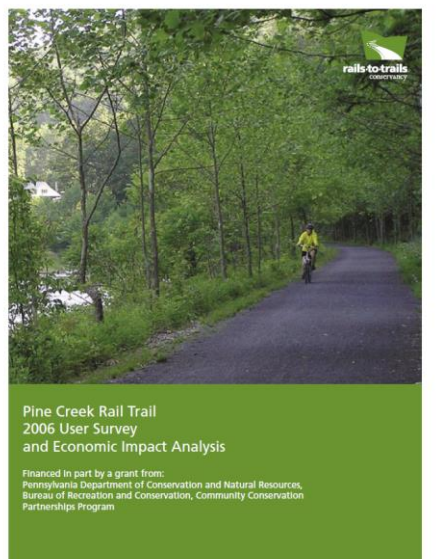
244 people responded to our User Preference Survey and with few exceptions answered every question. The majority of responders (53% of 244 responses) listed their age as either 60 or over (29%) or 50 to 60 (24%), followed by 40 to 50 (17%), 30 to 40 (14%) 20-30 (11%) and less than 20 (3%). Most responders also listed Penns Valley as their home (44% of 244 responses), followed by the State College area (30%), other (24%), or Brush Valley (2%). In contrast to the Pine Creek and Buffalo Valley surveys which only recorded the activity the user was engaged in at the time of the survey, we listed 10 possible uses for people to check off (plus an “other” category) and encouraged respondents to check off all of the categories they thought they might use the trail for, resulting in 750 total responses by 244 people surveyed. The majority of potential users (195) believe they would use this trail for walking (80% of 244 users) and almost as many (192 of 244) said they would use the trail for biking (79%). 145 people said they would use the trail for hiking (59% of 244), 74 for cross country skiing (30% of 244), 50 for access to public lands (20% of 244), fishing (10% of 244), horseback riding (8%), teaching (8%), commuting (4%), and hunting (1%). Respondents who filled in the “Other” category (8%) listed birdwatching, observing nature, bike-paddle-shuttle, rollerblading, water sports, running, jogging, dog walking, and campgrounds. Most users (58% of 245 responses) said they would use the trail occasionally, 37% would use it weekly, 4% daily, and 1% listed other. Most users (70% of 268) expected to spend 2 to 4 hours on the trail, 20% for less than 2 hours, and 10% for more than 4 hours. Two thirds of users (173 of 259) planned to travel less than 10 miles, 24% planned more than 10 miles, and 9% would use it for treks less than 10 miles. The majority of potential users (89%) said they might visit a café or restaurant during their trail trip, 51% expected to use a convenience store, and 34% would fuel up at a gas station. Only 10% planned an overnight stay with lodging, but a surprisingly high percentage (31%) thought they might hire a guide or an outfitter. The majority of users (57%) also thought they would spend less than \$25 per visit, while 29% expected to spend \$25 to \$50, 10% expected to spend between \$50 and \$75, 3% expected to spend between \$75 and \$100, and only 2% expected to spend more than \$100.

Buffalo Valley Rail Trail 2012  
User Survey and Economic  
Impact Analysis



## THE BUFFALO VALLEY RAIL TRAIL, A 9.2 MILE COMMUNITY BASED TRAIL

The Buffalo Valley Rail Trail User Survey gives us a glimpse of actual user preferences of a community based trail at the east end of the L&T in a setting very similar to the Penns and Brush valley region. The survey was prepared by professors from Bucknell University. The West Shore Railroad Company operated the 9.2 mile section of the former Lewisburg and Tyrone Railroad between Lewisburg and Mifflinburg until 1997. In 2009, the Lewisburg Area Recreation Authority (LARA) acquired the rights of way from West Shore, which had attempted unsuccessfully to operate an excursion train, and secured federal funds to build the trail, which opened in November of 2011. According to the Bucknell study, 1,137 distinct users visited the Buffalo Valley Rail Trail (BVRT) an estimated 12,043 times in the month of June 2012. The report's authors used that data to project an estimate of 100,000 trips per year, which equates to 30 people per mile per day. The age of the average BVRT user is 48.8 years old and visits the trail about 10.59 times per month. The average user traveled about 5 miles to access the trail and spent an average of 86.85 minutes on the trail. Most trail users (30%) use the trail 1 to 2 times per week for biking (70%), walking (25%) and jogging (5%). Most trail users (50%) also said they use the trail for both weekdays and weekends, with most of them (67%) on the trail for between 30 minutes and 2 hours. Most of them (52%) drove to the trail, 30% biked and 15% walked there. About half (49%) of users access the trail from the Lewisburg Trailhead, 28% access the trail from the Mifflinburg Park Trailhead, and the remainder access the trail from other locations. The majority of trail users (67%) said they use the trail for the trail (i.e., recreational use), 22% use it to visit friends and family, and 8% use it to get to work or shop (3%). Most trail users (79%) said their usage does not involve an overnight stay, and of those who did 8% stayed at a hotel and the other 13% stayed with friends and family. None of the overnights reported staying at a B&B. First time users enjoyed the trail 11.77 times each month. Each mile of distance a person traveled to reach the trail reduced the number of visits by .22, so a person traveling 50 miles to access the trail would make 1.1 fewer visits per month than a person living adjacent to the trail. The Bucknell study estimated direct economic impacts of the trail from recreational purchases at \$280,925 annually. Using a spending multiplier to account for indirect and induced spending, the study's authors estimate the total annual impact in the Susquehanna Valley at \$477,572 and spending equivalent to \$589,942 per year in the Commonwealth.



## PINE CREEK RAIL TRAIL, A 62 MILE DESTINATION TYPE TRAIL

The Pine Creek Trail User Survey offers us a perspective on user preferences for a destination type trail. The survey was prepared by the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy in 2006 for PA-DCNR. The 62.2 mile long trail is probably the best known rail trail in the state. **USA Today** ranked it as one of the "10 great places to take a bike tour" in 2001. The trail traces its beginning to 1883, when the *Jersey Shore, Pine Creek and Buffalo Railway* opened for service (3 years before the L&T began service to Lemont). The railway became part of New York Central in 1914, and was taken over by CONRAIL in 1976 as part of the restructuring of the moribund Penn Central. CONRAIL filed for abandonment on July 25, 1988, and the ICC/STB granted the Commonwealth's request to remove the tracks and develop the railbed as an Interim Use Trail in accordance with the 1983 railbanking act. In July 1990, the state legislature approved the purchase of the railbed by quit claim deed for \$1 (Senate Bill 967). Construction of the first 19 mile section between Ansonia and Blackwell began in 1995 and opened in August 1996. An additional 23 miles was added in June of 2001 and the final leg was completed in 2006, connecting Pennsylvania's Grand Canyon to a trailhead on 1-99/SR220 at Jersey Shore. The Rail Trail Conservancy estimated that 125,000 people visited the trail in 2006, or about 5.5 visitors per day per mile. Most users (86%) came from Pennsylvania, 6% from 20 other states, and 5% from New York. Of those originating in Pennsylvania, the highest percentage (2%) came from Lycoming County, followed by Lancaster County (9%), neighboring Tioga (9%) Center (7%) and Clinton (7%) counties, suggesting about half the trail users came from Lycoming or neighboring counties. Most users (42%) visited the trail a few times a year, another 12% visited a couple times a month, and 10% visited 1 or 2 times a week. Three quarters (74%) of users were over the age of 46, 29% 56-65, 28% 46-55; 17% 66 or older, and 15% 36-45. Only 12% were younger than 35, but 23% of users brought children 15 years or younger along on the trip, with 56% of them 10-15 years old, and 31% between 5 and 9 years of age. More than half of users (56%) were male. The majority of users (64%) came for biking, 24% for walking/hiking, 4% cross country skiing/snowshoeing, 3% jogging/running, and .4% horseback riding. Most (48%) used the trail weekdays and weekends, about a third (32%) used it just for weekends and 19% just on weekdays. Most users (49%) used the trail anytime, 28% used it in the morning, 20% in the afternoon, and 4% used it evenings. 63% spent more than 2 hours on the trail, 29% spent 1 to 2 hours; 8% spent 30 minutes to an hour, and .5% spent less than 30 minutes on the trail. Most visitors (58%) used the trail for recreation, 38% for health and exercise, 1% for

fitness training, and .3% for commuting. Visitors watched wildlife (36%), birdwatched (32%); studied flowers (17%); fished (5%); canoed (4%); kayaked (3%), or tubed (3%). The average expenditure per night for the 373 respondents (about 1/3) who answered the question was \$69.08.



## ESTIMATES OF USER DEMAND

While demographics provide context and surveys provide helpful guidance on trail usage and demand, usage and demand are driven by factors that, like real estate, are location specific. Trail demand and use are highly dependent on the location of trailheads and their proximity to users, the length of the trail, and the demographics and lifestyle preferences of the communities the trail is located in. Demand and use can also be influenced by the number of competing recreational options a community has to choose from. A destination type trail restricted to a remote area like the gap through the mountain beyond Coburn, with its high scenic value and world class reputation for trout fishing (e.g.; Green Drake Mayfly hatch) and mountain biking opportunities (e.g. Wilderness 101), might attract a similar number of visitors (5 people per mile per day) as the Pine Creek Trail, with its Grand Canyon and few other competing recreational choices. Likewise, a 5-10 mile long community based trail with a trailhead in Lemont might be expected to draw at least as many visitors as Lewisburg's 9.2 mile Buffalo Valley Rail Trail (30 people per mile per day), especially when you consider that the Centre Region's population of 92,096 residents is more than twice the size of Union County (pop. 44,949). But given that a 27 mile long destination type trail is not favored by the community at this time, and that shorter community based trails limited to the Penns/Brush valleys population (12,819 people, about half the size of the Buffalo Valley Trail community of 22,528 residents) are a more likely possibility at this time, we estimate demand for a 2 to 5 mile community based trail in Penns & Brush valleys to be between 5 and 10 visitors per mile per day. (For another comparison, the 16 mile Ghost Town Trail in Indiana, PA gets about 11 visitors per mile per day). Like the Pine Creek and Brush Valley trails, we would expect most people to use the trail for recreational purposes, like biking, hiking, walking and cross country skiing. We also would not ignore the high percentage of "potential trail users" from our survey who said they would use the trail for walking (80%) even though it is much higher than either the Buffalo Valley or Pine Creek surveys (25%). A recent (July 2012) Hunter College study, *Population Shifts and Implications for Walking in the United States*, notes "Major population shifts in the United States point to changes in American attitudes and behaviors regarding walking. These shifts are likely to result in a substantial increase in both recreational and utilitarian walking. Three demographic changes, in particular, are likely to promote this "walking revolution:" (1) the aging of the baby boomers, (2) the different transportation priorities of young people, and (3) the decline of the suburbs." Although the Penns Valley region is not expected to grow as fast as other regions of the county over the next decade, we do expect use of trails to increase faster than the population grows due to those trends.